The Athelstan Trust
Apprenticeship Policy

Date of Review	Approved by	Date of Approval	Next Review Date	Website
Sept 26	Board	15th October 2026	October 2028	Y

1. Aims

This policy sets out how the Trust will use apprenticeships to develop its workforce, support succession planning, and provide high-quality training opportunities across the Trust. It applies to all staff employed by the Trust.

2. Strategic Aims

The Trust will use apprenticeships to:

- **Develop talent**: Build internal capacity and reduce recruitment pressures.
- **Support progression**: Provide structured pathways from entry-level to leadership roles.
- **Maximise levy use**: Ensure efficient use of the Trust's apprenticeship levy funds.
- **Strengthen retention**: Offer meaningful development that encourages staff to stay.
- **Be an employer of choice**: attracting staff through the opportunities we provide.
- **Promote inclusion**: Ensure opportunities are accessible to all staff.

3. Eligibility

All staff may apply for an apprenticeship if:

- The programme is relevant to their role or future career pathway and lasts for at least 12 months (or more if specified in the apprenticeship standard or framework)
- They can commit to working 30 hours per week or more, including a requirement for off-the-job training to take 20% of that time.
- Their line manager supports the application.
- The apprenticeship chosen aligns with Trust workforce needs.
- The apprentice must have a contract of employment which is long enough for them to complete the apprenticeship successfully.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Executive Team

- Approves apprenticeship priorities and workforce planning.
- Ensures compliance with DfE funding rules.

HR and Payroll Team

- Manages levy funds and provider relationships.

- Advises staff and leaders on suitable programmes.
- Monitors quality and completion rates.

School Leaders

- Identify staff development needs.
- Support apprentices with time allocation and mentoring, including allowing apprentices to complete their minimum 20% off the job training, with appropriate time protected within their timetable.
- If there are any concerns that an apprentice may not be successful at any stage of the programme, this should be escalated to the Headteacher at the earliest opportunity.

Apprentices

- Engage fully with training and assessments.
- Maintain professional conduct and meet programme expectations.

5. Funding and Levy Management

The apprenticeship scheme is managed and operated by the Trust Central team. The school hosting the apprentice is responsible for managing the apprentice who is in post, or the staff member who is accessing the apprenticeship training.

The Trust will:

- Use levy funds to pay for apprenticeship training and assessment.
- Use levy transfers where appropriate to support local partners.
- Ensure no staff member is asked to contribute financially.
- Only work with approved training providers.

Where apprenticeship levy funding cannot cover the full cost of CPD, blended funding (from academy or central budgets) may be considered to ensure access to high-quality development opportunities.

6. Off-the-Job Training

All apprentices must complete **20% off-the-job training**, which may include:

- Workshops
- Coaching and mentoring
- Shadowing
- Online learning
- Project work

School leaders must ensure apprentices have protected time to complete this requirement.

7. Recruitment of Apprentices

The Trust may recruit:

- **Existing staff**

- **New apprentices** into roles such as Teaching Assistant, ICT Technician, Business Administrator, Premises Assistant, or Early Career Teacher routes

All recruitment will follow safer recruitment procedures as per the Athelstan Trust Recruitment Policy and align with Trust workforce planning. To request a new apprentice, or to offer an existing member of staff CPD training which is accredited as an apprenticeship, Headteachers follow the process set out in the Appendix below.

The hosting school will be responsible for funding the salary and any other associated employment costs. Apprentices must be an employee by the first day of their apprenticeship and as a minimum be paid the appropriate wage consistent with employment law.

At the end of the apprenticeship, the apprentice can remain with the Trust where a job opportunity exists.

8. Apprenticeship training providers

All training providers must be published on the Department of Work and Pensions Apprenticeship Provider and Assessment Register (APAR).

A total price must be agreed with the training provider for each apprenticeship, which includes the costs of training and assessment. This must include the cost of the end-point assessment which must be agreed with the provider selected from the register of end point assessment organisations.

The Trust is responsible for recording the required details of the apprenticeship in the account. The Trust can also give the training provider permission to enter information on their behalf, but need to authorise the apprentice details so they can use the digital funds to pay for that apprenticeship.

The Trust will complete any documentation required with training providers such as commitment statements and contracts.

9. Quality Assurance

The Trust will:

- Monitor provider performance and learner satisfaction.
- Track completion rates and progression outcomes.
- Review the policy annually to ensure alignment with Trust strategy.

Appendix A - Apprenticeship Approval Process Flowchart

1. Employee or line manager identifies development need and explores suitable apprenticeship options.
2. If not previously involved, employee discusses with line manager and approves in principle if in agreement. Line manager reviews capacity for 20% off-the-job training
3. Employee submits Apprenticeship Request Form to Headteacher
4. Headteacher reviews request and decides if it is within the school's workforce plan and budget.
5. Request is passed to HR centrally to review apprenticeship levy balance and training provider availability. All requests will be assessed against agreed prioritisation criteria, including: alignment to strategy, impact on staff retention and progression, cost effectiveness and urgency of skills needed.
6. The Central Team will assess if there are funds available to pay for the training in the Trust Apprenticeship Levy account. All requests will be approved by the CEO, who will have the final decision on how the funding should be used and allocated.
7. Employee, school HR and provider complete paperwork
8. Apprenticeship start date agreed
9. School arranges protected off-the-job training time and mentoring support if required
10. Apprenticeship begins
11. Progress reviews and line manager check ins.

In the event of oversubscription, applications will be ranked using the prioritisation criteria and schools notified of the decision.